



**DOING MORE FOR SCOTLAND**

**SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE (SFRS)  
TRANSFORMATION PROPOSAL**

**STAKEHOLDER BRIEFING NOTE  
JANUARY 2018**

## **Doing the right thing**

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service has a simple choice. We transform and do more for Scotland or we retain a 1940s model and leave Scotland exposed to risk that we cannot meet.

The solution we are proposing will improve the safety and wellbeing of communities, by making our resources work more effectively and efficiently.

With transformation, we will not only do more for Scotland but will ensure that, for undertaking a new role, our valued firefighters will receive a recognition package beyond that offered anywhere else in the UK.

SFRS is leading by example within the public sector in Scotland by offering to transform.

## **Doing more for Scotland**

By investing in safe and planned transformation, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service can do so much more for the people of Scotland.

Scotland is facing new and emerging risks, combined with the greatest public finance challenges seen in decades.

Our operating model has served us well, but was designed to meet the risks of the 1940s. We need a more efficient and effective model that will allow us to better protect Scotland, bring the Service into the 21st century and future-proof its very existence.

This is about doing the right thing for the people of Scotland. It is also the right thing to do for the already pressured public purse.

## The need to transform

- Fires are reducing but new risks are emerging;
- Risks include terrorism, emergency medical response, ageing population, severe weather;
- We need to be trained and equipped to meet these risks;
- Our people and resources are no longer aligned to need;
- Current model limits ability to reduce risk through prevention and intervention activity;
- Current model limits ability to support other public services and reduce demand;
- The retained Service needs strengthened to meet the needs of rural communities

## Benefits to Scotland

We can deliver for Scotland:

- Improved safety and wellbeing;
- A wider preventative role;
- Reduced demand and cost across the wider public sector;
- Greater returns for the taxpayer through a more efficient and effective model;
- A strengthened service for rural communities;
- Enhanced public (and firefighter) safety through new technology; and
- Reduced environmental impact through the introduction of new vehicles

## How SFRS proposes to transform



Outcomes will be improved through planned and safe transformation to deliver a more effective and efficient operating model, resulting in:

- A national service that better benefits all of Scotland;
- Rebalanced firefighter numbers, using natural turnover while still recruiting;
- A broader firefighter role supported by flexible new T&Cs and improved remuneration;
- A station footprint and resource allocation aligned to current and future need;
- Introduction of new vehicles, technology and crewing models;
- Improved capability and resilience within retained service; and
- Improved availability of retained appliances during the day.

## **Financial Position**

- Since April 2013 we have delivered over £53m of recurring annual savings; and
- Firefighter pay has been eroded and is currently equal to 1977 pay levels.

The Scottish Government in its draft 2018-19 budget has provided our budget with an uplift, together with the full benefit of our ability from April 2018 to reclaim VAT, totalling more than £15 million.

## **The future firefighter role**

Through negotiation, firefighters will be asked to accept a transformation of their role in exchange for a new and significantly improved recognition package:

- Harmonisation of current allowances;
- New T&Cs;
- Significantly wider role and responsibilities;
- New skills;
- New duty patterns where appropriate;
- More flexible working practices; and
- Adoption of new technologies

There will be no compulsory redundancies.

## **Strengthening Scotland's Retained Duty System (RDS)**

Our RDS crew members are as well trained and committed as whole time crew members, but the delivery model is no longer robust.

- 60-100 RDS fire appliances unavailable each day during daytime hours in Scotland;
- Recruitment and availability of RDS crew is a global issue;
- People now less likely to live and work within one geographical area;
- Need to create high value, full time posts into RDS areas;
- Need to introduce new technology, vehicles and mobilising models to increase availability.

## **Consultation**

We will undertake a full public consultation in the coming months. We are currently ensuring SFRS staff are informed about and engaged in the conversation about the future of their Service.

## Public Opinion Survey

- **98%** state SFRS is as important as other emergency services
- **89%** think SFRS should help in all types of emergencies
- **94%** trust the Service “a lot”
- **76%** want an appropriate response irrespective of where it comes from
- **89%** agree SFRS is an efficient public service

Mori, Survey of 1000 Scottish adults, May 2017

## Summary Key Facts and Figures about the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

- Largest fire and rescue service in the UK
- Fourth largest fire and rescue service in the world
- Attended **91,139** emergency incidents (all types) in 2016/17
- Total number of fires down **40%** in last decade
- Preventative safety advice provided to approx. **70,744** homes in 2016/17
- Carried out **8,939** non-domestic fire safety audits
- **£259m** annual resource budget
- **356** fire stations
- **240** Retained Duty System stations, **74** full time and **42** volunteer
- **422** pumping appliances

## SFRS Workforce Statistics - snapshot

- **c8000** personnel in total
- **3704** full time uniformed personnel (data correct at Oct 2017)
- **136** new full time firefighters recruited in 2017
- Delivered planned reduction of just **128** full time firefighter posts since 2013
- Scotland now has **268** more retained firefighters than ever before (data correct at Oct 2017)
- **c800** non-uniformed support staff